

~~SENSITIVE~~

CIA/SAVA /WVIND 700328



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 28 March 1970

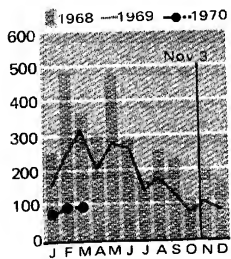
NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

For the President Only

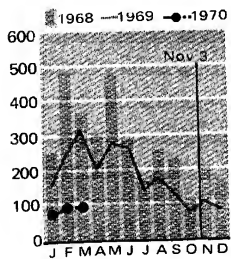
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SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

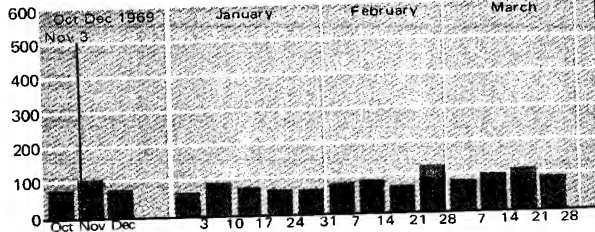
1968-1970

weekly average
for each month

OCTOBER 1969 - MARCH 1970

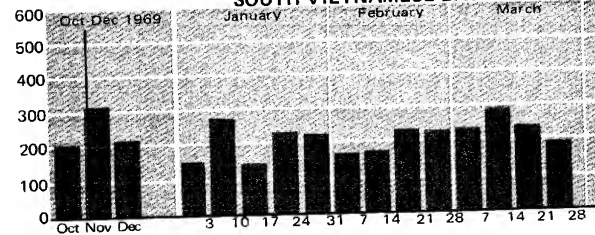
weekly data as reported, Jan-Feb-Mar
weekly average per month, Oct-Dec

US BATTLE DEATHS dropped to 85 from last week's high of 110.



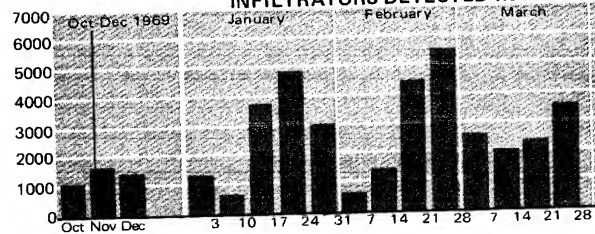
SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS

declined sharply to 180 from last week's 244. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than figures released to the press by the GVN.



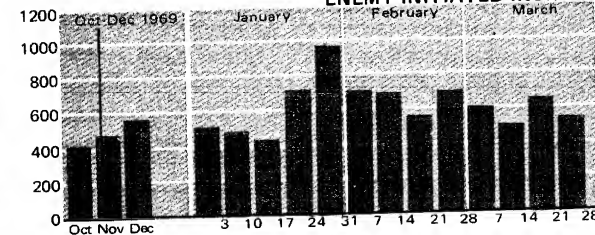
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE

during the week numbered seven four-digit groups and one small "H" group for a total of almost 3,600. On 29 March, two additional groups numbering some 900 were detected, thus raising the total number of infiltrators that have entered the pipeline since 23 October to some 55,000 to 56,500.



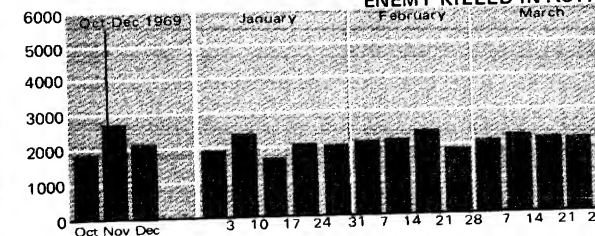
ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS

returned to a relatively low 537 from last week's 658.



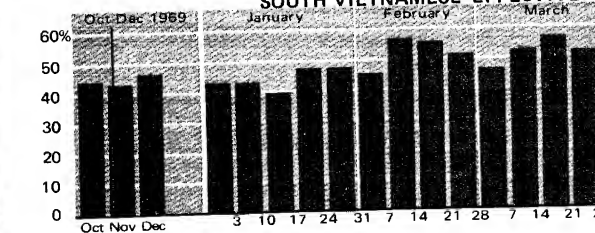
ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION

decreased to 2,133 compared to last week's 2,301.

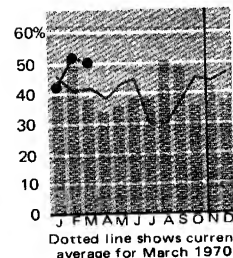


SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS

as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by RVN forces decreased to 52% from last week's high for the month of 56%.



Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary



Dotted line shows current average for March 1970

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

During the week here covered, every activity index except infiltration declined. Though there was a moderately high level of terrorist attacks in the Saigon area, elsewhere such action as occurred was mainly Allied-initiated.

Intelligence on a planned "high point" to begin the night of 31 March suggests that enemy tactical activity will increase somewhat in I, II, and III Corps during the next week. Enemy activity is expected to stress terrorism and Special Police units throughout Vietnam have been placed on alert. The Saigon authorities are braced for a rise in attempted terrorist actions.

Cambodian developments and Communist concern over their Cambodian sanctuaries will probably prompt continued Communist pressure on GVN positions in western IV Corps and Allied positions in western III Corps in an attempt to preclude or pre-empt Allied harassment of Communist forces in Cambodia.

Enemy Infiltration

During the past week, seven four-digit groups and one small "H" group totaling 3,557 personnel were detected. Additionally, two four-digit groups with 937 personnel were detected on 29 March to raise the estimate of infiltrators in the pipeline for March to some 11,500. Thus, as previously forecast, the flow for March is approaching that noted in January and February when departures averaged about 13,000. The estimate of infiltrators entering the pipeline since 23 October now stands at some 55,000 to 56,500 personnel. Overall, 76 four-digit groups have been detected in North Vietnam, 29 detected in Laos, and nine are "gap-fills."

In the logistics field, truck traffic via the Mu Gia Pass appears to have decreased significantly in recent weeks, although the southern entry points into Laos from North Vietnam remain in moderate use. Nonetheless, a continued high level of activity and a major southward re-deployment of antiaircraft and transportation elements have been observed in the Panhandle. One important logistic unit in the central Panhandle received materiel between 1 and 20 March at a rate two thirds greater than that of March 1969. Moreover, high priority was being given to the movement of stockpiled supplies into South Vietnam prior to the advent of the rainy season.

South Vietnam Developments

President Thieu apparently plans to announce a far-reaching economic program at the opening session of the National Assembly on 6 April, and will request special powers from the assembly to implement it. The program will address itself to the gross distortion in the trade balance, the budgetary deficit, the interest rate, and the present unrealistic exchange rate. He will emphasize the need for greater self-reliance and less dependence on foreign assistance in the coming years. Like the land reform program, Thieu may hope this move will improve his image in the U.S., while avoiding the executive-legislative tensions and domestic repercussions which accompanied his earlier taxation measures. Judged on past performance, however, there is considerable doubt that the Vietnamese have the technical competence to plan and execute such a sweeping economic plan without advice from international specialists.

Inept government handling of the arrest of some 40 students suspected of pro-VC activity has given Thieu's opponents an issue to play with like the Chau case. Although the police have documentary proof and/or confessions of VC activity against several of the students, the government has failed to present a convincing case to the public, and a student strike has now spread to all faculties of Saigon University. The government does not intend to press its case against the majority of the arrested students, however, and once the hard evidence against the principal leaders becomes known, student dissent may dissipate. Thieu's opponents, nevertheless, can be counted on to keep the pot bubbling and will probably play to the foreign press and TV gallery.

Communist Developments

It is still not clear how far Hanoi plans to go in support of Sihanouk's call for "national liberation" of Cambodia. Its strong rhetoric in support of Sihanouk, withdrawal of its diplomatic personnel from Phnom Penh, its probable role in the pro-Sihanouk demonstrations, and its limited troop movements in the direction of Phnom Penh are probably designed to shake the resolve of the new government and force it to agree to the continued use of Cambodia for bases and supplies. A resort to force by the Communists would make their base areas along the SVN-Cambodia border vulnerable to attacks from SVN, and they probably hope to avoid this risk. Nonetheless, they almost certainly will resort to military action against Cambodian forces unless Phnom Penh relaxes its vocal hostility to Communist use of Cambodian territory. The decision of both the Cambodian and South Vietnamese Governments to suspend cooperative cross-border operations for the time being may convince Hanoi its tactics of intimidation are working, but at the same time may encourage it to deploy more of its forces further into Cambodia.

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